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Younghoe Koo Named Semifinalist For Lou Groza Award

Award goes to top collegiate kicker



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Story Links

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - The Palm Beach County Sports Commission has released the 20 semifinalists for the 2016 Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award presented by the Orange Bowl, a list that includes Georgia Southern senior [Younghoe Koo](#). These 20 kickers have all excelled throughout the season in earning their places as semifinalists.

Eight of the 20 earn the honor for at least the second time, led by Utah senior Andy Phillips who has been named a semifinalist in all four years of his career. Memphis senior Jake Elliott, a finalist in 2015 and semifinalist in 2013, and Arizona State senior Zane Gonzalez, a semifinalist in 2014 and 2013, have earned the honor three times. They are joined by Louisiana Tech junior Jonathan Barnes (2015), Auburn junior Daniel Carlson (2015 finalist), Oklahoma State senior Ben Grogan (2014), Idaho senior Austin Rehkow (2015) and Virginia Tech junior Joey Slye (2015) as multi-time semifinalists.

Gonzalez tops the FBS leaderboard as the only kicker to reach 20 field goals thus far.

His 95.2 percent accuracy is bested among kickers with double-digit FGs only by the two perfect semifinalists, Georgia Southern senior [Younghoe Koo](#) (14-14) and Ohio State senior Tyler Durbin (11-11).

In fact, every kicker with at least 10 field goals and converting at better than 85 percent is on the list: Koo, Durbin, Gonzalez, Carlson (94.4), Penn State senior Tyler Davis (92.9), Fresno State junior Kody Kroening (92.9), Ole Miss junior Gary Wunderlich (92.9), Southern Miss sophomore Parker Shaunfield (92.3), San Diego State sophomore John Baron II (90.9), Rehkow (90), Barnes (88.2), Cal junior Matt Anderson (87.5), Air Force junior Luke Strebel (87.5), and Minnesota sophomore Emmit Carpenter (86.7).

Of Gonzalez's 20 field goals, an astounding six are from at least 50 yards out, including the longest kick of the year. His 59-yard field goal in Week 7 was also the kick that gave him the FBS record for career scoring by a kicker. But he's not the only semifinalist finding success from long distance. Last year's finalists Carlson and Elliott also have multiple makes from 50+ yards, while Barnes has hit from 54 and Koo's perfect season includes a 53 yarder.

Semifinalists will be a panel of more than 100 FBS head coaches, SIDs, media members, former Groza finalists, and current NFL kickers to select the three finalists. These finalists will be announced on Nov. 22 and honored at the 25th annual Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Awards Banquet on Dec. 5 in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. The winner will be announced live on ESPN at the Home Depot College Football Awards Show on Thursday, Dec. 8.

The Award is named for National Football League Hall of Fame kicker Lou "The Toe" Groza, who played 21 seasons with the Cleveland Browns. Groza won four NFL championships with Cleveland setting numerous franchise records, including most games played, most points scored, and an amazing 107 consecutive games in which he scored a point. He was named NFL Player of the Year in 1954 and was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1974. Although an All-Pro offensive lineman as well, Groza ushered in the notion that there should be a place on an NFL roster for a kicker.

For more information on the Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award and to see the "Stars of the Week" throughout the season, please go to www.lougrozaaward.com. For even more updates on the best kicking performances throughout the season, follow @LouGrozaAward on Twitter.

Since the first Lou Groza Award was handed out in 1992, 21 finalists, including 12 winners, have gone on to appear in the NFL, earning nine trips to the Pro Bowl and taking home five Super Bowls. That list includes current NFL kickers Roberto Aguayo, Dan Bailey, Randy Bullock, Mason Crosby, Graham Gano, Dustin Hopkins, Sebastian Janikowski, Mike Nugent, Cairo Santos, Caleb Sturgis, and Blair Walsh.

The Lou Groza Award is a member of the National College Football Awards Association

(NCFAA) which encompasses the most prestigious awards in college football. The 22 awards boast 722 years of tradition-selection excellence. Visit www.NCFAA.org to learn more about our story.

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission is a private, not-for-profit organization contracted by Palm Beach County to promote and market the County as a sports and sports tourism destination. The Commission brings sporting events and activities to the County, enhances economic impact, stimulates bed tax revenues (primarily in the off-season), and maximizes utilization of County facilities. The Commission offers a full range of event service support, corporate partnerships, sponsorships and a local membership program that support its goals. Local, regional, national and international marketing efforts are ongoing by the Commission with sports organizations and event owners. The Commission also produces sports-related programs for the residents of Palm Beach County including the annual Lou Groza Award program, the Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame and the Kids Fitness Festival of the Palm Beaches. For more information on the Palm Beach County Sports Commission, go to www.palmbeachsports.com

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